

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1. (Currently amended) Spherical particles for thermal spraying, consisting essentially of a ~~rare earth (inclusive of yttrium)~~ containing yttrium or lanthanide-containing compound and having a breaking strength of at least 10 MPa and an average particle diameter of 10 to 80  $\mu\text{m}$ .

Claim 2. (Currently amended) Spherical particles for thermal spraying, consisting essentially of a ~~rare earth (inclusive of yttrium)~~ containing yttrium or lanthanide-containing compound and having a bulk density of at least 1.0 g/cm<sup>3</sup>, an aspect ratio of up to 2, and a cumulative volume of pores with a radius of up to 1  $\mu\text{m}$  which is less than 0.5 cm<sup>3</sup>/g.

Claim 3. (Original) The spherical particles of claim 2 having a particle size distribution in which a particle diameter D90, D50 and D10 corresponds to 90 vol%, 50 vol% and 10 vol% accumulation, respectively, wherein D90 is up to 100  $\mu\text{m}$  and the ratio of D50 to a Fisher diameter is up to 5.

Claim 4. (Original) The spherical particles of claim 3 wherein D10 is at least 5  $\mu\text{m}$ , and the particles have a dispersion index of up to 0.6.

Claim 5. (Currently amended) The spherical particles of claim 1 wherein said ~~rare earth containing~~ yttrium or lanthanide-containing compound is a ~~rare earth~~ yttrium or lanthanide oxide or ~~rare earth~~ yttrium or lanthanide compound oxide.

Claim 6. (Currently amended) The spherical particles of claim 2 wherein said ~~rare earth containing~~ yttrium or lanthanide-containing compound is a ~~rare earth~~ yttrium or lanthanide oxide or ~~rare earth~~ yttrium or lanthanide compound oxide.

Claim 7. (Currently amended) A thermal sprayed component comprising a substrate having a surface and a coating of the ~~rare earth containing~~ yttrium or lanthanide-containing compound particles of claim 1 thermally sprayed to the substrate surface.

Claim 8. (Currently amended) A thermal sprayed component comprising a substrate having a surface and a coating of the ~~rare~~

~~earth-containing~~ yttrium or lanthanide-containing compound particles of claim 2 thermally sprayed to the substrate surface.

Claim 9. (New) The spherical particles of claim 1, wherein said yttrium or lanthanide-containing compound is at least one selected from the group consisting of yttrium oxide and ytterbium oxide.

Claim 10. (New) The spherical particles of claim 2, wherein said yttrium or lanthanide-containing compound is at least one selected from the group consisting of yttrium oxide and ytterbium oxide.

Claim 11. (New) The spherical particles of claim 1, wherein said spherical particles are obtained by granulating yttrium or lanthanide-containing compound fines having a Fisher diameter of up to 0.6  $\mu\text{m}$  into granules and firing said granules.

Claim 12. (New) The spherical particles of claim 2, wherein said spherical particles are obtained by granulating yttrium or lanthanide-containing compound fines having a Fisher diameter of up to 0.6  $\mu\text{m}$  into granules and firing said granules.

Claim 13. (New) The spherical particles of claim 11, wherein said granules are fired at a temperature of 1200 to 1800°C.

Claim 14. (New) The spherical particles of claim 12, wherein said granules are fired at a temperature of 1200 to 1800°C.

Claim 15. (New) The spherical particles of claim 1, having an average particle diameter of 10 to 60  $\mu\text{m}$ .